

NEW MILL URBAN DISTRICT.

REPORT

— OF —

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

1905.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

In addition to agriculture and the usual trades of a country district, the chief occupations in New Mill are the manufacturing of woollen cloth and the spinning of yarn, coal mining, stone quarrying, and brick and tile making. None of these are very unhealthy. Several of the mills in the centre of the district are still unoccupied, and the coal mines, stone quarries, and brick works are situated near to or beyond the boundaries of the district. Consequently many of the mill hands and labourers have to travel considerable distances to and from their work. Were it not for the loss of time entailed this might be an advantage to the mill workers, but it is an additional toil to the labourer, and all are much exposed to the changes of a cold and rainy climate. For there is no passenger railway nor tramway in the district. I believe electric trams from Huddersfield were promised some years ago, but they have not arrived. Some kind of cheap mechanical locomotion might help to make up for the want of employment near home, which is the greatest need of the district. Whether near or afar work has been moderately plentiful, and I have not heard of any organised unemployed. Still I fear the usual emigrations have been made, leaving, as usual, abundant house accommodation.

The houses are generally substantially built, and I should not call any at present occupied unfit for habitation, but many are damp through being built close against the hill sides. They usually have plenty of air space both back and front, excepting those just mentioned and a few back-to-back houses. The surroundings of the houses are kept fairly clean and tidy in the more populous parts, but on the outskirts women sometimes throw their rubbish on the roads. This is being gradually remedied by the erection of dust bins at suitable places. Two new houses have been built, and there is one in course of erection. Plans are submitted to the Council. No action has been taken under the Housing of the Working Classes Act.

Sewers.—All populous parts of the district are systematically sewered and connected with sewage disposal works consisting of bacterial beds and land prepared for filtration. Several small hamlets have separate arrangements comprising small tanks and land filtration. Numerous farms and detached houses are simply drained on to the land. 200 yards of 9in. main sewers and 350 yards of 4in. and 6in. connections have been laid during the year. Hade Edge and Flowery Field are still badly drained. It is to be hoped that the Council will be able to attend to that locality.

Excrement and House Refuse.—Covered ashes privies are generally used, but there are also several pail-closets and a few water-closets. Dust-bins and ash-pits are also provided for household refuse. These and the privies are emptied partly by contractors, partly by the Council's sanitary staff, and also by the owners. This complication of systems is under the management of the Sanitary Inspector, and no complaints have reached me during the past year. Two water-closets have been constructed, and nine ashles privies have been reconstructed during the past year.

Water Supply.—All populous parts of the district have now a plentiful supply of excellent and pure water obtained from springs at considerable elevations, largely collected by means of underground drifts, and therefore safe from ordinary risks of pollution, and distributed by gravitation. 2,000 yards of additional mains were laid. Although the rainfall was much below the average—38 inches instead of about 50 at Boshaw—the public supply was well maintained, being interrupted only for a few hours and that before the new additions were connected.

There is a large extent of country with houses scattered here and there, which lies at too high a level to be served by the present works. Here the supply at Hill Top has been improved by sinking a well and erecting a pump. But Victoria and the houses on the road leading to Law are still without sufficient water. This difficult problem has had your attention for many years and I understand there is a scheme under consideration for supplying Victoria by pumping from a lower level.

Lodging Houses, etc.—There are no Common Lodging Houses, nor Canal Boats, nor Offensive Trades in the district.

Slaughter Houses.—Three Slaughter Houses have been inspected and found to be fairly well kept. One of these is now unoccupied.

Cowsheds.—The condition of the Cowsheds is being improved very slowly. The old mistals are being remodelled at the rate of about one a year. The Model Regulations ought to be adopted in the interests of the dairymen themselves, because the general public know that milk is often produced under conditions in which perfect cleanliness is impossible, and they are using substitutes for milk more and more. Enormous quantities of condensed milk are sent into this country from the continent. They even send us condensed skimmed or separated milk. New Zealand is now sending dried milk, free from germs! The way to meet this competition is to supply the natural article fresh and pure, and it will help to restore confidence in it if the production and distribution are known to be well looked after.

Workshops.—There are 26 workshops registered. They have all been inspected twice during the year except two, which were seen for the first time. They are all satisfactory in respect of air space, means of ventilation, and sanitary conveniences. The tailors' and dress-makers' workrooms are kept very clean. Some of the cloggers' and blacksmiths' shops might, with advantage, be swept up more frequently. There is no over-crowding. I only know of one bakehouse. It was newly whitewashed when visited. It is quite suitable as to construction, etc. No out-workers are employed in connection with these workshops.

Nuisances.—The Nuisance Inspector reports that 4 cases were under consideration at the close of 1904; 14 others were discovered or reported; 14 notices were issued; 12 nuisances were abated; and there were 6 in hand at the end of 1905.

Infectious Disease.—Notification has been in force since 1896. This district is comprised in the area managed by the Colne and Holme Joint Isolation Hospital Committee, who have a hospital at Meltham for scarlet fever, diphtheria, and enteric fever, and a small-pox Hospital at Moor Top, Meltham. There has always been ample accommodation wherever I have had occasion to enquire.

Infected premises are stoved by the formalin lamp and cleansed, and disinfectants are supplied free to the public when needed.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Births.—The births of 124 infants were registered, making a birth-rate of 26.8 per thousand persons living within the district per annum. The average rate for the previous nine years was 28.8. The rate for England and Wales for 1905 was 27.2, which was the lowest on record. Public attention is being drawn to the subject of the declining birth rate. Eminent persons, Bishops amongst others, are afraid we may not raise men enough to fight our battles. Other eminent persons are busy packing off superfluous workers to Canada!

The number of deaths was 62, so there were two births for each death, and the surplus of births over deaths was 62, which is about the average natural increase, and also the average number of individuals who remove out of this district annually.

Deaths.—The deaths of 56 persons were registered, but five people belonging to New Mill died in the Workhouse and one died in an Asylum, making a total of 62, and a death rate of 13.4 per 1,000, which is the lowest rate since the district was formed. The average for the previous nine years was 16.3. The death-rate for England and Wales for 1905 was 15.2, also the lowest rate on record. The rate for New Mill therefore was 1.8 less than that for the whole country in a particularly healthy year. The improvement is not confined to a single year but has been progressive. It is now ten years since the district was formed. If we compare the first five years with the next five years it appears that the average death-rate in the former group was 17.0 per 1,000, and in the latter group only 14.9 per 1,000.

The number of deaths and the death-rates for each township were as follows:—

	Rate.
Fulstone ... 34	16.7 per 1,000 per annum.
Hepworth ... 10	9.0 "
Scholes ... 18	11.6 "

Infantile Mortality.—16 infants died before attaining the age of 12 months, making an infantile mortality rate of 129.0 per thousand births. The average for nine years was 124.8. The rate for England and Wales, which averages about 146, was 128 last year, which was also the lowest rate on record. In Huddersfield an average of 142 was reduced to 119 per 1,000 births.

This subject is also claiming public attention, and a new table has been issued designed to show the chief causes of infantile deaths. Reference to Table V will show that in New Mill these deaths are not due to such gross parental neglect as not providing medical attendance, because all the deaths are certified, nor to the common infectious diseases, nor directly to improper feeding, but mainly to such causes as debility at birth and pneumonia, to which sanitary authorities have not hitherto given much attention.

Disease.—The diseases from which the 62 persons were certified to have died are enumerated in Table IV, from which we find that the *Zymotic death-rate was very low, viz: 43 per 1,000*, but the *Phthisis death-rate was very high, viz: 2.16*. 10 persons, 8 females and 2 males, died from Phthisis or Consumption, one in every 6 deaths! This frightful disease claims its victims mostly in youth or early manhood or womanhood, often after months or years of sickness. Its prevention is, therefore, a matter of great importance to all.

Notifications.—I received last year 19 notification certificates; they referred to:

1 case of Small Pox
1 case of Diphtheria
4 cases of Erysipelas
9 cases of Scarlet Fever
3 cases of Enteric Fever
1 case of Puerperal Fever

—

Four cases of Scarlet Fever occurred in one house; the rest were sporadic cases of doubtful origin. Only the case of Small Pox and one of Scarlet Fever were sent to the Isolation Hospitals. In the other cases such isolation as could be maintained at home was thought to be sufficient, and the infection does not appear to have been spread by any case after notification.

There have been very few cases of those infectious diseases which are not included in the notification list. No school has had to be closed during the year for sickness.

Altogether the health of the district has been better than usual, and there is no notifiable disease in the district at the present moment.

ALBERT THORP,

Medical Officer of Health for New Mill,
near Huddersfield.

Undercliffe,

Holmfirth,

Feb. 15, 1906.

TABLE I.
New Mill Urban District.

Vital Statistics of Whole District during 1905 and previous Years

YEAR.	Population estimated to Middle of each Year.	BIRTHS.		TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.				Deaths of Non-residents register'd in Public Institutions in the District.	Deaths of Resid'nts regist'r'd in Public Institutions beyond the district.	NETT DEATHS AT ALL AGES BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.	
		No.	Rate.*	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all ages.				No.	Rate.*
				No.	Rate per 1,000 Births regist'r'd					No.	Rate.*
1895											
1896	4624	132	28·5	16	121·2	85	18·3	1	1	85	18·3
1897	4624	161	34·8	25	155·3	91	19·6			91	19·6
1898	4624	136	29·4	14	102·9	67	14·4		1	68	14·7
1899	4624	136	29·4	20	147·0	73	15·7			73	15·7
1900	4624	139	30·0	15	107·9	77	16·6	1	2	78	16·8
1901	4624	120	25·9	17	141·6	63	13·6		7	70	15·1
1902	4656	124	26·6	17	137·1	69	14·8		3	72	15·4
1903	4624	134	28·9	15	111·9	66	14·2		1	67	14·4
1904	4624	120	25·9	11	91·6	74	16·0		1	75	16·2
Averages for Years 1895—1904	4627	133·5	28·8	16·6	124·8	73·8	15·9		6	75·4	16·3
1905	4624	124	26·8	16	129·0	56	12·1		6	62	13·4

* Rates calculated per 1,000 of estimated population.

Area of District in acres (exclusive of area covered by water.)	Total population at all ages	4624	At Census of 1901.
	Number of inhabited houses	1014	
	Average number of persons per house... ..	4·55	

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TABLE II.

New Mill Urban District.

Vital Statistics of separate Localities in 1905 and previous years.

New Mill Urban District.

TABLE III.

Cases of Infectious Disease notified during the Year 1905.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES.	At all Ages.	CASES NOTIFIED IN WHOLE DISTRICT.				TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED IN EACH LOCALITY.	No. OF CASES REMOVED TO HOSPITAL FROM EACH LOCALITY.
		Under 1	1 to 5.	5 to 15	15 to 25		
SMALL POX.....	1				1		
DIPHTHERIA	1			1			
ERYSIPELAS	4			1	3	4	
SCARLET FEVER	9		3	6		2	7
ENTERIC FEVER.	3			1	1	1	
PUERPERAL FEVER.....	1				1		1
Totals.....	19	3	8	2	5	7	9
						1	3
							1

TABLE IV.
New Mill Urban District.

Causes of, and Ages at, Death during Year 1905.

CAUSES OF DEATH.	DEATHS IN WHOLE DISTRICT AT SUBJOINED AGES.							DEATHS IN LOCALITIES. (AT ALL AGES.)			
	All Ages.	Under 1 Year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and up- wards.	Fulstone.	Hepworth.	Scholes.	Deanhouse
Scarlet Fever	1		1					1			
Croup	1	1						1			
Enteric Fever	1						1	1			
Enteritis	1	1								1	
Puerperal Fever	1					1				1	
Phthisis	10				3	6	1	5	1	4	(1)
Other Tubercular Diseases ...	2	1			1					2	
Cancer, Malignant Disease ...	1					1		1			
Bronchitis	4	2				1	1	1	2	1	(1)
Pneumonia	7	4	1	1		1		5	1	1	
Premature Birth.....	2	2							2		
Diseases and Accidents } of Parturition	1				1			1			
Heart Diseases	7		1			4	2	5		2	(1)
Accidents	1					1			1		
Suicides	1					1			1		
All other causes	21	5			2	3	11	11	4	6	(3)
Males28											
All causes.....	62	16	2	2	7	19	16	34	10	18	(5) (1)
Females.34											
Death Rate per 1,000 per ann	13·4	3·4	·43	·43	1·5	4·1	3·4	16·7	9·5	11·6	

TABLE V.

New Mill Urban District.

INFANTILE MORTALITY DURING THE YEAR 1905.

Deaths from stated Causes in Weeks and Months under One Year of Age.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 Week.	1-2 Weeks.	3-4 Weeks.	Total under 1 Month.	1-2 Months.	3-4 Months.	4-5 Months.	6-7 Months.	7-8 Months.	10-11 Months.	Total Deaths under One Year.
ALL CAUSES. { Certified	4	1	1	6	3	1	1	3	1	1	16
ALL CAUSES. { Uncertified											Nil.
Diarrhoea, all forms.....					1						1
Wasting Diseases. { Premature Birth	1	1									2
Wasting Diseases. { Atrophy, Debility, Marasmus }	3		1		1						5
Tuberculous Meningitis									1		1
Bronchitis						1	1				2
Laryngitis								1			1
Pneumonia.....					1			2		1	4
Totals.....	4	1	1	6	3	1	1	3	1	1	16

Births in the Year ... 124.

Deaths from all Causes at all Ages ... 62.



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